

<b>Notice of Allowability</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>
	10/657,409	BAERLOCHER ET AL.
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>
	Jason Pinheiro	3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1.  This communication is responsive to amendments filed 01/14/2009.
2.  The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-20.
3.  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a)  All    b)  Some\*    c)  None    of the:
    1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4.  A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5.  CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
  - (a)  including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
    - 1)  hereto or 2)  to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b)  including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6.  DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

1.  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2.  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3.  Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
4.  Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit  
of Biological Material
5.  Notice of Informal Patent Application
6.  Interview Summary (PTO-413),  
Paper No./Mail Date 20090212.
7.  Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8.  Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9.  Other \_\_\_\_\_.

/Dmitry Suhol/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3714

**EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Holby Abern on 02/11/2008 and on 02/25/2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

Replace claim 1 with the following:

A method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising:

- (a) randomly generating a designated target number of player chips, wherein the designated target number of player chips is greater than zero;
- (b) causing at least one display device to display a playing board having a plurality of positions;
- (c) enabling a player to individually place one of a plurality of player chips at one of the positions, wherein placement of said player chip that causes at least one of a plurality of game chips to be flanked on opposite sides by player chips converts each said flanked game chip to a player chip;

(d) causing the at least one display device to display the placed player chip at said position;

(e) using a table in memory that is weighted according to said designated target number of player chips remaining to individually place one of the plurality of game chips at one of the positions, wherein placement of one of the game chips that causes at least one player chip to be flanked on opposite sides by game chips converts each said flanked player chip to a game chip;

(f) causing the at least one display device to display the placed game chip at said position;

(e g) repeating steps (c) and (e f) until the player has placed a provided amount of player chips onto the positions of the playing board; and

(f h) thereafter, providing an award to the player based on the remaining number of player chips after the player placed the provided amount of player chips onto the positions.

Claims 21 - 96 have been cancelled.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

2. Claims 1-20 are allowed.

**REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Claim 1 distinguishes over the prior art of record in that the Applicant specifically claims "randomly generating a designated target number of player chips, wherein the designated number of player chips is greater than zero; and using a table in memory that is weighted according to said designated target number of player chips remaining to individually place one of the plurality of game chips at one of the positions". The teaching of the Applicant's claims are different from the prior art in that the prior art does not teach randomly generating a designated target number of player chips and using a table in memory that is weighted according to said designated target number of player chips remaining. Rather the prior art teaches the use a of table in memory to win the game without taking into account the target number of player chips.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jason Pinheiro whose telephone number is (571)270-1350. The examiner can normally be reached on M - F 8:00 AM - 4 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dmitry Suhol can be reached on (571) 272-4430. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Dmitry Suhol/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art  
Unit 3714

/J. P./  
Examiner, Art Unit 3714